

Walking Tours ■

Architecture Amble 108
Around the Ring 110
Church Walk 113
Kitay Gorod Tour 114
Literary Sojourn 115
Underground Odyssey 117

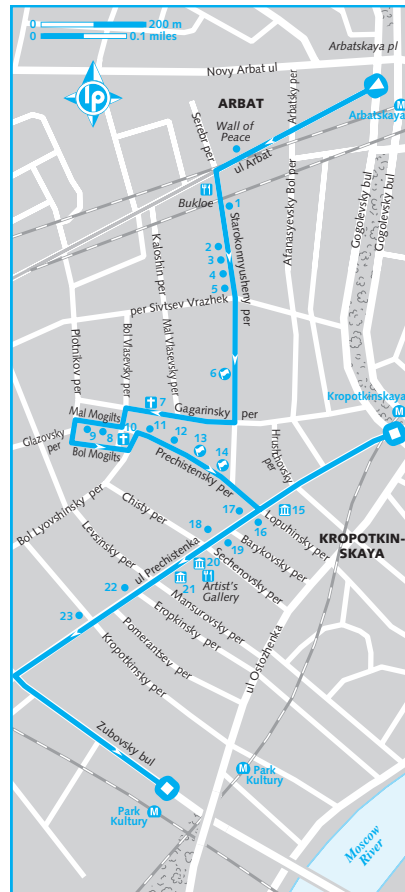
Walking Tours

Moscow is a city for walking, which is evident from the hordes of people crowding the pavements. Of course it is too huge to walk everywhere, which is why there is the metro. Much of the city was built during a time when cars were a rarity (or nonexistent for that matter), so despite the proliferation of road traffic on the streets today, most of the city is accessible by public transport and a strong pair of legs.

The following walking tours provide some suggested routes by which to see the city under your own steam. The Underground Odyssey (p117) is a tour of the artistic highlights of Moscow's metro system.

ARCHITECTURE AMBLE

Just off the well-worn cobblestones of touristy ulitsa Arbat lie the quiet lanes of old Arbat, a district once inhabited by writers and their heroes, old nobles and the nouveaux riches.



Its people are long gone, but you can still sense them in the grand houses they left behind.

The tour starts at the eastern end of the Arbat. Walk southwest on ulitsa Arbat and turn south into Starokonyusheny pereulok. The green wooden house 1 at No 38 looks exquisite after some recent renovations. On the western side of the street, the architecture reads like a text book of Art Nouveau: the fine tile work of No 41 2, the somewhat disproportionate sculptures supporting the balconies of No 39 3, the imitation rough stone of No 37 4 and the neo-Empire style of No 35 5. These are the so-called *dokhodnye doma*: flats built for rich professionals who couldn't afford their own house, but were wealthy enough to afford the luxury of a spacious and stylish apartment. In the next block, on the right, and dating from the late 19th century, No 23 is now the Canadian Embassy 6 (p220).

At Gagarinsky pereulok, turn right and head west. Hidden in the yard at No 20 is the Church of the Martyr Vlasy 7. The church itself dates from the 17th century, and the refectory and bell tower are from the 19th century.

AMBLE FACTS

Start Arbatskaya ploshchad (M Arbatskaya)
End Zubovskiy bulvar (M Park Kultury)
Distance 4km
Duration Three hours
Pit Stops Artists' Gallery (p135); Bukloe (p134)

Turn south into Bolshoy Vlasevsky pereulok, then turn west and proceed along Maly Mogiltsovsky pereulok. Notice the stucco decorations of No 4A 8 in subdued shades of green.

Turn south on Plotnikov pereulok once you reach the end of the side street. The building at No 4, erected in 1907 by the architect Zherikhov, is said to have housed a brothel 9 popular with Moscow's political and intellectual elite. Its frieze has frivolous full-sized reliefs of Tolstoy, Pushkin, Gogol and others, all enjoying the company of Greek gods.

Turn left and walk east along Bolshoy Mogiltsovsky pereulok. At No 2/2 you'll find the run-down 18th-century Church of Assumption in Mogiltsy 10. According to Leo Tolstoy, this is the church Natasha Rostova attended in *War & Peace*.

Walk around the church in a counterclockwise direction till you reach Prechistenky pereulok. Turn right and proceed eastward along the lane. The building at No 12 was the home of the writer Nikolai Ostrovsky 11 (not to be confused with the playwright Alexander Ostrovsky). Nikolai lived here between 1930 and 1932, when he wrote *How the Steel was Tempered*. Back in the day, this novel about the birth of the Soviet Union was required reading.

The elegant Art Nouveau mansion 12 at No 10 was recently renovated for a private residence. Nearby, No 8, now housing the Moroccan Embassy 13, was built by the architect Valcott, who also designed the Hotel Metropol. The affluent mansion at the corner of Starokonyusheny pereulok is the Austrian Embassy 14.

Proceed along the side street till you reach the intersection. Now you are at your main destination, ulitsa Prechistenka. Catch your breath as you prepare to see a dozen of the loveliest buildings from the 17th to the early 20th centuries clustered along one street. Turn southwest on ulitsa Prechistenka.

On the east side at No 11, the former Lopukhin mansion now houses the Tolstoy Literary Museum 15 (p93). A member of the Fabergé family lived in one of the luxurious apartments 16 at No 13. In 1917 he fled Russia in a hurry, leaving behind all his belongings, which gave rise to rumours that there were treasures hidden in the walls of the apartment. And, in fact, there were. In the late 1970s a cache of silver was found during planned repairs.

Opulent No 20 17 once belonged to the 1812 Napoleon war hero General Yermolov. Later, the millionaire Ushkov purchased the house and completely rebuilt it according to the tastes of his wife, the finicky prima ballerina Alexandra Balashovaya. No 22 dates back to the 18th century, but is best known as the first Moscow fire station 18, which was founded here in 1835.

No 17, on the east side, once belonged to Denis Davydov, another hero of the Napoleonic Wars. It now houses the city's Building Maintenance Committee 19.

The next building, a masterpiece by architect Lev Kekushev, is now the home of the Tsereteli Gallery 20 (p93) and the funky café, Artists' Gallery (p135). At No 21, the Morozov mansion houses the Russian Academy of Art 21 (p92). The industrialist Morozov, a great lover of impressionist art, rebuilt this mansion to accommodate his famous collection. Both the collection and the mansion now belong to the Academy.

At No 28, the early-20th-century Dokhodny dom 22, again by Kekushev, is generously decorated with sculptures, stucco, iron grilles and other detailing. The building at No 32 used to house the private Polivanov Men's School 23. The famed school's students included the poet Bryusov, the artist Golovin, and the first Russian world champion chess master, Alexin.

To reach the nearest metro station, continue down ulitsa Prechistenka to the Garden Ring (Zubovskiy bulvar) and turn left. Park Kultury is 400m southeast. Alternatively, stroll back up ulitsa Prechistenka to Kropotkinskaya.

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AROUND THE RING

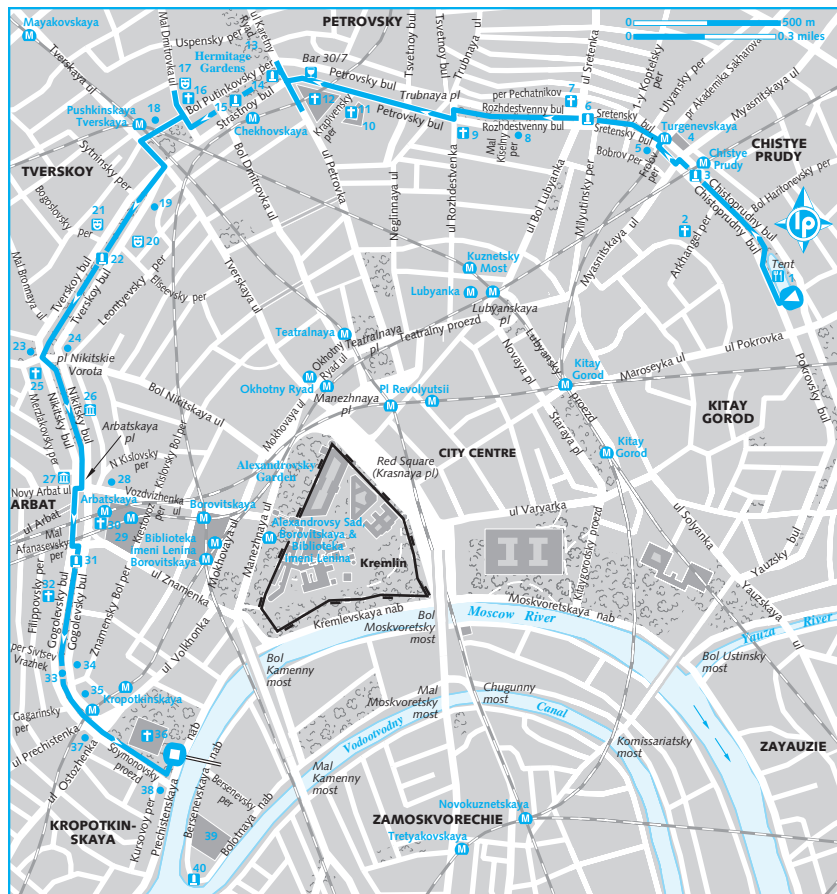
The Boulevard Ring was created in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, replacing Moscow's old defensive walls with a dual-carriage ring road. The new boulevard circling the city centre was lined with stately mansions and theatres. And the shady path between the two carriageways became the place for Moscow residents to promenade.

Today the Boulevard Ring has lots more cars than carriages. But the strip of green down the middle is still a pleasant place to walk and is Moscow's oldest-shaped park. Eight kilometres long by 20m wide, it forms a near-complete circle around the centre, from the banks of the Yauza River southeast of the Kremlin to the banks of the Moscow River in the southwest. This walking tour takes you most of the way around the ring.

A stroll around the ring is a pleasant way to explore some of Moscow's most enticing neighbourhoods, often boasting elegant pre-Revolutionary architecture. The path is lined with flowerbeds and studded with

WALK FACTS

Start Chistoprudny bulvar (М Chistye Prudy)
End Christ the Saviour Cathedral
(М Kropotkinskaya)
Distance 5km
Duration Four hours
Pit Stops Tent (p126); Bar 30/7 (p141)



statues of past Russian cultural greats. Street artists and mobile phone users are also on hand injecting a flavour of present-day Russian culture.

The Boulevard Ring changes its name at every major intersection, but it is usually 'something-bulvar', and it is always recognizable by the green strip down the centre. If you are not up for the walk, you can do most of this tour by trolleybus: Nos 15 and 31 run both ways along the ring between Trubnaya ploshchad (М Tsvetnoy bulvar) and ulitsa Prechistenka (М Kropotkinskaya).

Start east of the centre on Chistoprudny bulvar. Chistye Prudy 1, or 'Clean Ponds', refers to the lovely pond that graces the Boulevard Ring at its intersection with ulitsa Pokrovka. The surrounding area was largely developed by the merchant Alexander Menshikov in the 18th century. As you head north along Chistoprudny bulvar, you will see the golden cross that tops Menshikov Tower 2 (p79) to your left.

At the centre of the boulevard, near the Chistye Prudy metro, stands a statue in honour of Alexander Griboyedov 3, a 19th-century playwright and diplomat. His comedy *Woe from Wit*, a brilliant satire on Moscow aristocratic life, is one of Russia's most often-staged plays. Note the aristocratic characters from the play sculpted into the base of the memorial.

Cross the busy intersection at Myasnitskaya ulitsa, where the Boulevard becomes Sretensky bulvar. At No 11, the Lukoil Skyscraper 4 stands shiny, modern and out of place. But when viewed from across the square, the reflective façade offers a lovely image of the baroque building across the street at No 6 5.

At the opposite end of Sretensky bulvar stands a monument to Nadezhda Krupskaya 6 – revolutionary, writer and wife of Vladimir Ilych Lenin. Krupskaya is widely recognised as Lenin's top advisor and confidante, and an active Bolshevik in her own right.

Cross ulitsa Sretenka, signalling the start of Rozhdestvenny bulvar. On the corner, the pretty whitewashed Church of the Assumption of the Virgin 7 is a working church and usually open for a look around its candle-lit interior. The 18th-century building at No 14 is a baroque beauty. In the 1830s this building served as a Centre for Writers 8, hosting readings and meetings attended by the likes of Mikhail Lermontov and Alex Gertsen (Herzen).

At the end of the block on the left-hand side, duck into the Nativity Monastery 9 (Rozhdestvensky monastir), for which this section of the boulevard is named. Founded in 1380, it is one of Moscow's oldest monasteries, and it looks it. The walled grounds contain a 16th-century church and a grand bell tower. Some of the frescoes in the church have been restored, but otherwise this place has an air of dilapidated grace.

Continue straight on the Boulevard Ring along Petrovsky bulvar (don't get confused by Tsvetnoy bulvar, another dual-carriageway road that goes off to the north). The left-hand side of this strip is dotted with architectural and religious landmarks. Look for the Art Nouveau apartment complex 10 (*ansambl zhilikh domov*) at No 4 Krapivensky pereulok. Designed by the architect Rodionov, the façade is characterised by its quite extraordinary tortoise-shell brick pattern, which extends all the way around the horseshoe-shaped building. The complex nearly hides the equally decorative Church of Sergei in Krapivnika 11, which is visible from the side street.

The corner of Petrovsky bulvar and ulitsa Petrovka is dominated by its namesake Upper St Peter Monastery 12 (Petrovsky monastir; p81). The entrance is on ulitsa Petrovka.

Cross ulitsa Petrovka and continue on to Strastnoy bulvar. Weather permitting, this section of the Boulevard Ring is dotted with summer cafés (*letny kafe*), as are the pleasant Hermitage Gardens 13 just north of here. Sculptures along the way commemorate two celebrated musicians: Vladimir Vyssotsky 14, bard and social revolutionary from the 1960s; and Sergei Rachmaninov 15, the celebrated turn-of-the-century pianist and composer.

Cross Bolshoy Putinkovsky pereulok to the north side, so you can admire the tent roofs on the Church of the Nativity of the Virgin in Putinki 16 (p82) and the impressive façade of the Lenkom Theatre 17 (p147).

You are now entering busy Pushkinskaya ploshchad, so named for the gallant poet whose statue commands the square. This square is the nearest thing to a Russian Fleet St. On the northern side, east of Tverskaya ulitsa, squat the offices of Izvestia 18, formerly the newspaper of the USSR Supreme Soviet, now a bland daily.

Make your way across Tverskaya ulitsa via the underground *perekhod* (crosswalk). Continue southwest along the path that runs between the two lanes of traffic on Tverskoy

bulvar. On the left, Café Pushkin (p129) is part of the Rimsky Korsakov Quarter 19, named after Catherine the Great's paramour, who owned the buildings. Although the complex dates from the 18th and 19th centuries, most of it was destroyed during renovation, leaving only the original façade that fronts Tverskoy bulvar.

The huge brown block at No 22 is the newly renovated building of the Gorky Moscow Art Theatre 20 (p144). Previously on this site stood the house of Praskova Yurevna, a socialite fond of hosting extravagant balls and operas. At one of these infamous events, Alexander Pushkin supposedly met his future wife, Natalya Goncharova.

Hidden behind other buildings on the north side is the 17th-century Church of Ioann Chrysostom, which was commissioned by Mikhail Romanov to house the *Icon of Ioanna Bogoslova*. The church was taken over by the Pushkin Drama Theatre 21 (p148) during the Soviet period, and the fate of the icon is unknown.

In the middle of the boulevard is a statue of Sergei Yesenin 22, an early-20th-century poet who was in and out of favour throughout the Soviet era. Writing about love and landscapes earned him the nickname 'the peasant poet'. His short, stormy life was torn apart by no less than five marriages and violent bouts with alcoholism. He finally took his life in 1925 at the age of 30.

At the bottom of the street is one of the most beautiful squares in Moscow. Nikitskie Gates (Nikitskie Vorota) takes its name from the gates that stood here from the 15th to the 18th centuries. At the corner of the square, the Rotunda Fountain 23, by Zurab Tsereteli, hides a statue of Pushkin and Goncharova, erected in 1999 to celebrate the poet's birthday.

On the square's eastern side is the headquarters of the Russian news agency Itar-Tass 24. Its windows are full of fantastic photos of the events of the week. South of the square, the beautiful Church of Feodor Studit 25 is all that remains of a 17th-century monastery founded by the Patriarch Filaret. The enchanting white bell tower is a 1990s' replica of the original.

Continue south on the Boulevard Ring, now called Nikitsky bulvar. The classical building at No 12A now houses the Museum of Oriental Art 26 (p88), but it was built for the musical Lunin family. The moulded lyre on the front of this elegant house is a reminder of the many musical evenings that took place here. The quiet courtyard at No 7 contains a gloomy statue of Nikolai Gogol and the Gogol Memorial Rooms 27 (p87), where the writer spent his final, tortured months.

Nikitsky bulvar ends at busy Arbatskaya ploshchad. Take a moment or two to gawk at the exotic, Moorish House of Friendship with Peoples of Foreign Countries 28 (p88) at the corner of Vozdvizhenka ulitsa.

South of the square, the hulking Ministry of Defence 29 occupies much of the block. It leaves just a corner of space for the sweet SS Boris & Gleb Chapel 30, which seems out of place amid the whizzing cars and hordes of people. Built in 1997, the chapel commemorates a 1483 church of the same name that was destroyed in the 1930s.

Continuing south, the statue of Nikolai Gogol 31 marks the start of Gogolevsky bulvar, another peaceful stretch of the Boulevard Ring. The golden domes of the 17th-century Church of the Apostle Philip 32 rise above the baroque buildings on the west side of the street. Further down the street, artists set up stalls 33 to hawk their paintings, often featuring the eye-catching Christ the Saviour Cathedral, which is visible from here.

On the east side, the ostentatious, multicolumned mansion at No10 34 served as a meeting place for the Decembrists. This group of liberal-minded nobility rallied for reform in the early 19th century – and were promptly exiled to Siberia. The building at No 6 was part of the Tretyakov estate 35, and in fact housed the Tretyakov collection at the end of the 19th century.

The boulevard ends at its intersection with ulitsa Prechistenka, at the base of the mammoth Cathedral of Christ the Saviour 36 (p90). Fredrick Engels 37 surveys the square from its western side.

Walk along the Cathedral's wide marble terrace to the back, where it overlooks the Moscow River. From here, you have a fantastic view of the amazing Art Nouveau masterpiece at No 1 Kursovoy pereulok 38. Ornate brickwork and detailed tile mosaics adorn the exterior – a product of the architect Zhukov and the artist Malyutin. Built in 1886, it now houses administrative services for the diplomatic corps.

Across the river, Krasny Oktyabr Confectionary 39, Moscow's most beloved sweet maker, and Peter the Great 40, Moscow's most hated landmark, are in plain view. This little island is the subject of a fierce debate; developers intend to convert the sweet factory into luxury condominiums.

The iron bridge leads to the opposite bank, where there is talk of establishing an art district by filling the old warehouses with studios and galleries. In the meantime, it is something of a bridge to nowhere, but the views of the Kremlin and the Cathedral are breathtaking.

CHURCH WALK

The atmosphere of 19th-century Moscow lives on in the low buildings, old courtyards and clusters of onion domes along narrow ulitsa Bolshaya Ordynka, which runs 2km down the middle of Zamoskvorechie to Serpukhovskaya ploshchad; Pyatnitskaya ulitsa is roughly parallel, 200m to the east. The many churches located in the area make up a wonderful scrapbook of Muscovite architectural styles. Take the tour now, as developers are quickly changing the landscape of this graceful neighbourhood.

The name 'Ordynka' comes from *orda* (horde); until the 16th century this was the start of the road to the Golden Horde's capital on the Volga, where the Tatar ambassadors lived. Other sources maintain that the street received its name from the 'ordyntsy', who lived in this area in the 15th century. 'Ordyntsy' were the people taken hostage by Tatars then bought by wealthy Russians to work as servants.

Start at Pyatnitskaya ulitsa, at the intersection of Klimentovskiy pereulok. At No 26, the St Clement's Church 1 commands the corner. Built in the 1740s, this is a rare example of true baroque architecture in Moscow.

Head up Pyatnitskaya ulitsa toward the Vodootvodny Canal, and turn left on Chernigovskiy pereulok. The small, white SS Mikhail and Fyodor Church 2, dating from the late 17th century, has two rows of spade gables and five domes on a thin tower. The larger St John the Baptist Church 3, from the same period, houses an exhibition of Russian glassware. St John's Bell Tower, the Zamoskvorechie landmark that fronts Pyatnitskaya ulitsa, was added in 1753.

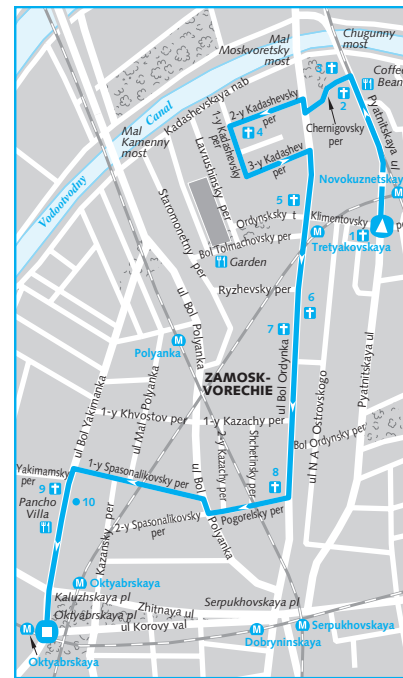
Continue to the end of Chernigovskiy pereulok and cross busy ulitsa Bolshaya Ordynka to peek down the narrow Kadashevsky 2-y pereulok. The tall Resurrection Church in Kadashi 4 – which houses a restoration centre for some other churches – is under restoration itself. Its rich late-17th-century decoration is a fine example of Moscow baroque. The tall and elegant belfry earned the nickname 'the candle'.

Turn left on Kadashevsky 1-y pereulok and left again on Kadashevsky 3-y pereulok to see some of Zamoskvorechie's small back alleys, before heading back to ulitsa Bolshaya Ordynka. Turn right, and walk south to the busy intersection with Klimentovskiy pereulok. You can't miss the empress-style Virgin of Consolation of All Sorrows Church 5 at No 20, which dates mostly from between 1828 and 1833.

Continue south. At No 27A, the blue-and-white Church of St Nicholas in Pyzhi 6 is a typical five-domed, mid-17th-century church, with

WALK FACTS

Start Klimentovskiy pereulok (M Novokuznetskaya)
End Oktyabrskaya ploshchad (M Oktyabrskaya)
Distance 2km
Duration One hour
Pit Stops Garden (p137); Coffee Bean (p121); Pancho Villa (p138)



spade gables and thin onion domes. It is a working church, so it is likely to be open for a peek inside. Opposite, the new-Russian SS Martha and Mary Convent 7 at No 34A was built between 1908 and 1912. Its pretty single-domed Intercession Church contains impressive, colourful frescoes, although the church is normally open only for services. At the beginning of the 20th century, the convent was famous for its charitable work.

Further south at No 60/2, St Catherine Church 8 was built in 1767 to celebrate the enthronement of Catherine II (the Great). The ceiling has fragments of murals by 18th-century artist Dmitry Levitsky.

From here, turn right on Pogorelsky pereulok and continue on i-y Spasonalikovsky pereulok all the way to ulitsa Bolshaya Yakimanka. Your eyes will immediately alight on the finest of all the Zamoskvorechie churches. Church of St John the Warrior 9 (p97). This bold blend of Russian and European baroque produces delightful results. Opposite, the residence of the French Ambassador 10 is equally striking.

Continue south to Oktyabrskaya ploshchad, where you can cool off with a margarita at Pancho Villa (p138) or hop on the metro.

KITAY GOROD TOUR

This walking tour winds its way through Kitay Gorod, which – settled in the 13th century – is one of the oldest parts of Moscow. It became an active trade and financial centre: records from the 17th century show that this area contained 72 rows of trading arcades. Street names such as Khrustalny pereulok (Crystal Lane) and Vetoshny pereulok (Carpet Lane) remain from that era. Even more intriguing are remnants of the old city wall and the tiny, colourful churches, which pepper the narrow streets of Kitay Gorod.

Start at the Hotel Metropol, southeast of Teatralnaya metro, and walk east down Teatralny proezd to the stately gate. This historical and architectural complex is Old Fields 1 (p66), which includes excavations of the 16th-century fortified wall that used to surround Kitay Gorod, and the foundations of the 1493 Trinity Church. Beside the remains of the wall and the church stands the memorial statue of Ivan Fedorov, reputedly responsible for producing Russia's first printed book in 1563. The gated walkway of Tretyakovsky proezd leads into Kitay Gorod.

Walk down Tretyakovsky proezd and turn right to head west along Nikolskaya ulitsa, Kitay Gorod's busiest street. It also used to be the main road to Vladimir.

The ornate building at No 17 was formerly a hotel known as Slavyansky Bazaar 2. Here, in 1897, directors Stanislavsky and Nemirovich held their celebrated and very extended meeting, during which they founded the Moscow Art Theatre (MKhT), now named Chekhov Moscow Art Theatre (see the boxed text, p147). The famous hotel is also featured in the Chekhov short story *The Lady with a Lapdog*, as the hotel where Gurov's lover stays when she comes to Moscow.

The green-and-white building, with the lion and unicorn above its entrance at No 15, is the Synod Printing House 3 (p77), where Ivan Fyodorov printed that first book. Up until the early 19th century, Kitay Gorod

was something of a printing centre, and home to 26 of Moscow's 31 bookshops at the time. The Zaikonospasky Monastery 4 ('Behind the Icon Stall' Monastery; p78) at Nos 7-9 refers to the busy icon trade that also took place here.

Turn left on Bogoyavlensky pereulok and head south; look out for the Moscow baroque Epiphany Cathedral on the right-hand side. The church was built in the 1690s, but the Monastery of the Epiphany 5 (p77) dates to the 13th century. If you are lucky, you might catch a concert (or rehearsal) performed in the bell tower.

When you reach the corner of ulitsa Ilyinka, notice the exquisite details on the buildings on the south side of the street. Ulitsa Ilyinka was Moscow's financial heart in the 18th and 19th centuries. The old Stock Exchange 6 is on the corner at No 6. Built in the 1870s, it now houses the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Turn right on ulitsa Ilyinka and head back toward Red Square. At No 3, the tiny Cathedral of St Ilyin the Prophet of God 7 is undergoing renovation, but the interior is open. The exposed brick and eroding walls give an air of antiquity to this 1519 church, among the oldest in Moscow.

Turn left and walk down Khrustalny pereulok. The Old Merchants' Court, or Gostinny Dvor 8, occupies the block between ulitsa Ilyinka and Varvarka. It is now completely renovated and filled with shops, including some excellent stops for souvenir hunters (see p156).

Take another left and head east on ulitsa Varvarka, which is crowded with tiny churches, old homes and what remains of the giant former Hotel Rossiya. The pink-and-white St Barbara's Church 9, now government offices, dates from 1795 to 1804. Like its predecessor on this site, it was a merchants' church, built with funds donated by the rich traders who lived in the nearby Zaryadie neighbourhood. The reconstructed 16th-century English House 10 (p77), white with peaked wooden roofs, was the residence of England's first emissaries to Russia.

Built in 1698, the Church of St Maxim the Blessed 11 at No 4 is now a folk-art exhibition hall. Next to it is the pointed bell tower of the 17th-century Monastery of the Sign 12, incorporating the monks' building and a golden-domed cathedral.

Tucked in between the street and the former Hotel Rossiya is the small but interesting Romanov Chambers in Zaryadie 13 (p77), devoted to the lives of the high-ranking Romanov *boyars* (nobles). The colourful St George's Church 14 at No 12 dates from 1658.

Cross ulitsa Varvarka and walk up Ipatyevsky pereulok. The enchanting 1630s Church of the Trinity in Nikitniki 15 (p77) is an exquisite example of Russian baroque hidden amid the overbearing façades of the surrounding buildings. At the time of research, only the church's basement was open, but the interior frescoes are fantastic.

Head east from Ipatyevsky pereulok out to Staraya ploshchad. At the southern end of this square is All Saints Cathedral on the Kulishka 16, which was built in 1687. In 1380 Dmitry Donskoy built the original wooden church on this site to commemorate those who died in the battle of Kulikovo. Some remains of the old city wall can be seen in the underground passage at the corner of ulitsa Varvarka and Staraya ploshchad. This *perekhod* (cross walk) is also the entrance to the Kitay Gorod metro stop.

LITERARY SOJOURN

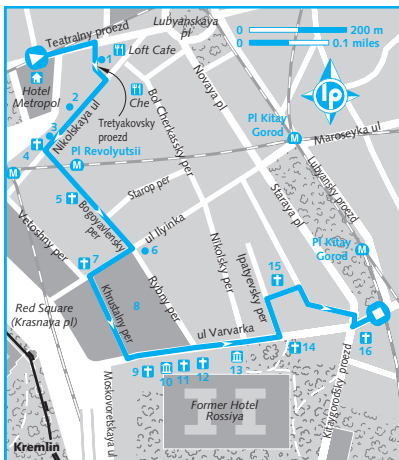
A walk around Moscow offers a chance to see some original settings from Russian literature, as well as the environs where various authors and poets lived and worked. Start at busy Arbatskaya ploshchad, at the southern end of Nikitsky bulvar. The quiet courtyard at No 7 contains a gloomy statue of Nikolai Gogol and the Gogol Memorial Rooms 1 (p87), where the writer threw his manuscript for *Dead Souls* into the fireplace.

Across the street at No 8A 2 is an 18th-century mansion that was home to Colonel Kiselyov, a literature fanatic and friend of Pushkin. Apparently, Pushkin and Goncharova attended a ball at the colonel's home the day after their wedding in 1831. During the Soviet period, this building became the House of the Press, and writers such as Yesenin, Blok and Mayakovsky all presented their work here. In 1925, just two months after Yesenin recited his poem *Flowers* here, his fans returned to pay him their last respects.

Head west on ulitsa Novy Arbat ulitsa. After one block, turn right in front of the 17th-century Church of St Simeon the Stylite 3, which was Gogol's regular parish church. Head north-west along Povarskaya ulitsa and take the first left on ulitsa Malaya Molchanovka. The pink

WALK FACTS

Start Teatralnaya ploshchad (Theatre Square);
M Teatralnaya
End Staraya Ploshchad (M Kitay Gorod)
Distance 1.5km
Duration Two hours
Pit Stop Loft Café (p124); Che (p124)



house at No 2 was the home of Mikhail Lermontov, author of *A Hero of Our Time*. It now houses the Lermontov House-Museum 4 (p88).

Return to Povarskaya ulitsa and turn left, heading northwest. Povarskaya ulitsa (Cooks' Street) was once inhabited by the royal court's cooks. The names of the lanes in this area still evoke the tsars' kitchen: Stolovy (Dining Room), Skatertny (Tablecloth), Khleby (Bread) and Nozhovy (Cutlery). Turn right on Nozhovy pereulok and head north. Cross Bolshaya Nikitskaya ulitsa. The graceful Church of the Grand Ascension 5 (p82) was built between 1798 and 1816 by Vasily Bazhenov and Matvei Kazakov. Here Pushkin married Goncharova in 1831; the happy couple grace the Rotunda Fountain 6, east of the church.

A statue of the lesser-known Tolstoy (and distant relative of Leo) Alexei Tolstoy 7 stands in the small park across the lane from the church. Also a writer, Alexei Tolstoy is known primarily for his 20th-century novels about the civil war and the revolution, the most famous being the trilogy *The Ordeal*.

Continue north on Nozhovy pereulok until it ends at Malaya Nikitskaya ulitsa. Opposite the church on Malaya Nikitskaya ulitsa is an Art Nouveau masterpiece at No 6/2 that once was the house of the wealthy merchant Stepan Ryabushinsky. Designed by Fyodor Shekhtel, with mosaics by Mikhail Vrubel, the house was later gifted to writer Maxim Gorky, who often complained about the extravagant décor. The building still houses the Gorky House-Museum 8 (p84). Behind the Gorky House-Museum is Alexei Tolstoy's flat 9.

From Malaya Nikitskaya ulitsa, take an immediate right and head north on ulitsa Spiridonovka. The statue of another early-20th-century poet, Alexander Blok 10, stands a bit further up this street. The revolutionary Blok believed that individualism had caused a decline in society's ethics, a situation that would only be rectified by a communist revolution.

Head back to Malaya Nikitskaya ulitsa and turn right. This quiet, shady area is lined with some lovely examples of Russia's prerevolutionary architecture. The 18th-century classical estate at No 12 11 once belonged to the wealthy Bobrinsky family. It was the model for the Larins' house in Pushkin's poem *Yevgeny Onegin*.

At the end of Malaya Nikitskaya ulitsa, turn right onto the Garden Ring. Popular 19th-century writer Anton Chekhov lived and worked here at No 6 ulitsa Sadovya-Kudrinskaya. Now called the Chekhov House-Museum 12 (p85), this is where he wrote such masterpieces as *Three Sisters* and *The Seagull*. Chekhov described his style: 'All I wanted was to say honestly to people: have a look at yourselves and see how bad and dreary your lives are! The important thing is that people should realise that, for when they do, they will most certainly create another and better life for themselves.'

Head back on Malaya Nikitskaya ulitsa. Take the first left and walk north on Vspolny pereulok. At the intersection with ulitsa Spiridonovka, the name changes to Yermolayevsky. Proceed another 200m to

reach the Patriarch's Ponds 13 (p84), infamous as the opening scene of *The Master and Margarita*, by Mikhail Bulgakov. The huge statue west of the pond is the 19th-century Russian writer Ivan Krylov 14, known to every Russian child for his didactic tales. Scenes from his stories are depicted around the statue of the writer.

Turn left on Malaya Krasina ulitsa and head out to the Garden Ring. Turn right and walk one block north. The otherwise nondescript building along at No 10 used to house Bulgakov's flat 15, where he wrote *The Master and Margarita* and lived up until his death. The empty flat used to be a hang-out for dissidents and hooligans, but now the building has tight security appropriate for this high-rent district.

Up ahead is Triumfalnaya ploshchad, previously named for the poet and playwright Vladimir Mayakovsky, whose statue 16 stands in its centre. A favourite of the Bolshevik regime, Mayakovsky sought to demystify poetry, adopting crude language and ignoring traditional poetic techniques.

From here you can break for lunch at the Starlite Diner (p131), or hop on the metro.

UNDERGROUND ODYSSEY

The Moscow metro is a marvel of urban design. Every day, as many as nine million people use the metro system – that's more than in New York and London combined. What's more, this transport system combines function and form. Many of Moscow's metro stations are marble-faced, frescoed, gilded works of art. So while you are waiting for that train, stroll around and admire the frescoed ceilings, mosaic tiles and crystal chandeliers. Note that diversity of theme is not a strength here: it does not go too far beyond revolutionary heroism, unity between the workers and peasants, and friendship between the Soviet peoples. But the craftsmanship is nonetheless extraordinary. Not exactly a walking tour, this odyssey is an opportunity to explore the most magnificent of Moscow's metro stations.

These days, the metro has implemented a sort of public-relations campaign. You will notice posters decorated with pretty, smiling young ladies in uniform promising 'Good weather, any time of year.' These *devushky* (young women) bear little resemblance to the babushkas sitting at the bottom of the escalators, but let's not mull over a technicality.

When Stalin announced plans for *Metrostroy* (construction of the metro), loyal communists turned out in droves to contribute their time and energy to this project. Thousands of people toiled around the clock in dire conditions, but it was all worth it when the first metro line opened in 1935, travelling from Park Kultury in the south to Sokolniki in the north (known as the Sokolnicheskaya, or Sokolniki line). Apparently, the first stations are very deep because they were designed to double as bomb shelters.

Start at Komsomolskaya 1, the station where the Sokolnicheskaya line intersects with the Koltsevaya line, or Ring line. The station is named for the youth workers who helped to construct the first stations. At the Komsomolskaya (Sokolnicheskaya line) station, you will see the Komsomol emblem at the top of the limestone pillars. The Komsomolskaya (Koltsevaya line) station has a huge stuccoed hall, the ceiling featuring mosaics of past Russian military heroes including Peter the Great, Dmitry Donskoy and Alexander Suvorov.

From Komsomolskaya, proceed around the ring, getting off at each stop along the way. When you are through admiring the underground artwork, hop back on the train (heading in the same direction) and go to the next station.

Next stop, Prospekt Mira 2 is decorated in elegant gold-trimmed white porcelain. The bas-reliefs feature productive farmers picking fruit, children reading books and other happy socialists.

The stained-glass panels at Novoslobodskaya 3 envelop this station in Art Nouveau artistry. Besides the usual cast of workers and farmers, you might recognise Vladimir Ilych Lenin.

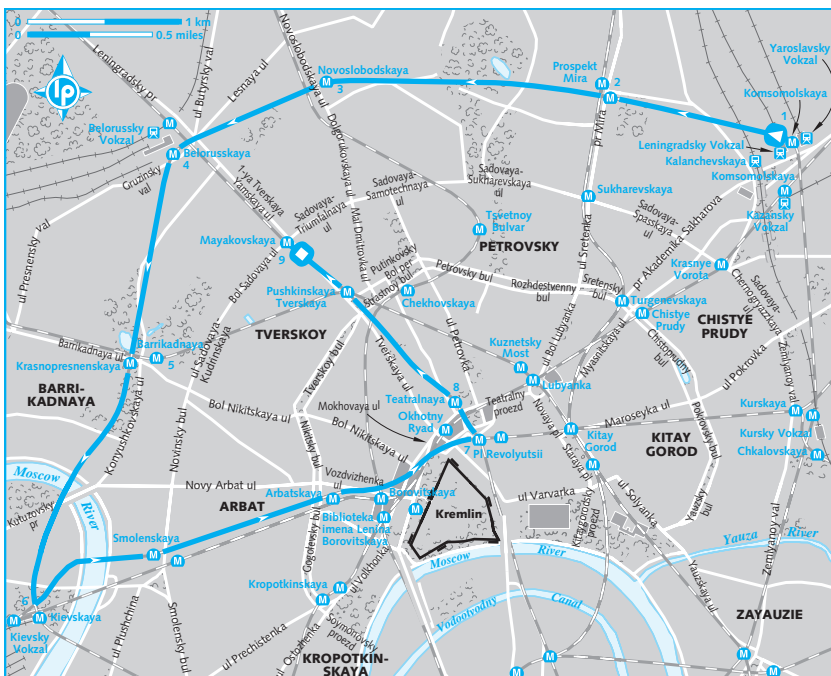
The ceilings at Belorusskaya 4 station are festooned with mosaics. Once again, the models were joyful, productive workers and farmers – this time from Belarus, as you can tell from the traditional dress.

Done in dramatic red-and-white marble, Krasnopresnenskaya 5 has bas-reliefs depicting the fateful events of 1905 and 1917. This neighbourhood was the scene of some of the terrible battles from those years. Not to mention the fateful events of 1991 and 1993 (see p48), which also took place nearby.

SOJOURN FACTS

Start Arbatskaya ploshchad (M Arbatskaya)
 Finish Triumfalnaya ploshchad (M Mayakovskaya)
 Distance 3km
 Duration Three hours
 Pit Stops Café Margarita (p131); Coffee Mania (p121);
 Starlite Diner (p131)





At Kievskaya 6 you don't have to break your neck looking at the ceiling, as the mosaics adorn the walls. The themes are predicably Ukrainian, or more accurately, Russo-Ukrainian. Look for Pushkin among the Ukrainian folk singers and also the friendship between Russian and Ukrainian farmers. Other scenes are from Ukrainian history, such as the *Battle of Poltava*, 1709. At Kievskaya, switch over to the Arbatsko-Pokrovskaya line, which is dark blue. The hall of this station continues the theme, with panels depicting 300 years of Russian-Ukrainian cooperation. The colourful frescoes stand out against the elegant marble columns and granite floor.

From here, take the train to Plushchad Revolyutsii 7, one of the most dramatic stations. The life-size bronze statues in the main hall and beside the escalators illustrate the idealised roles of ordinary Russians. Heading up the escalators, the themes are: carrying out and protecting the revolution, industry, agriculture, hunting, education, sport and child-rearing.

Switch to Teatralnaya 8, on the Zamoskvoretskaya line (green). This station was formerly called 'Plushchad Sverdlova' in honour of Lenin's right-hand man, whose bust is in the hall. The labradorite and marble that adorn this hall are apparently from the original Church of Christ the Saviour.

Take the Zamoskvoretskaya line to Mayakovskaya 9, the *piece de resistance* of the Moscow metro. This grand-prize winner at the 1938 World's Fair in New York has an Art Deco central hall that's all stainless steel and pink rhodonite. This is also one of the deepest stations (33m), which allowed it to serve as an air-raid shelter during WWII.

ODYSSEY FACTS

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